



Lions-Quest *Skills for Adolescence*

Lions-Quest *Skills for Adolescence* (SFA) is a comprehensive positive youth development and prevention program designed for schoolwide and classroom implementation in grades six through eight (10 to 14 years old). It involves educators, parents, and community members to develop in young adolescents:

- Essential social and emotional competencies
- Good citizenship skills
- Strong, positive character
- Skills and attitudes consistent with a drug-free lifestyle
- An ethic of service to others within a caring and consistent environment

The classroom curriculum-based program may be delivered daily, two to three times per week, or weekly with equal effectiveness, depending on the implementation model. The learning model employs inquiry, presentation, discussion, group work, guided practice, and reflection to build positive social behaviors of self-discipline, responsibility, good judgment, and respect for self and others. It develops youths' positive commitments to the family, school, peers, and community. SFA supports social and emotional learning, drug prevention, service learning, and character education initiatives.

TARGET POPULATION

SFA is specifically designed to address the developmental needs of male and female adolescents 10 to 14 years old in grades six through eight in a variety of public and private school settings. Since 1984, the program has undergone four revisions, extensive pilot testing, and cultural adaptations for use in more than 33 industrialized and developing countries. In wide use in the



*Effective Substance Abuse and
Mental Health Programs
for Every Community*

PROVEN RESULTS*

- Knowledge about the risks of alcohol and other drug use improved 43%.
- Significantly lower self-reported rates of using beer, liquor, and chewing tobacco in the previous month.
- SFA students had lower predictions of use of five harmful substances in the next 30 days.
- Fewer SFA Hispanic/Latino students engaged in lifetime alcohol use, recent alcohol use, and recent binge drinking than Hispanic/Latino students in control schools.

**SFA students compared to control group students.*

INTERVENTION

Universal

Selective

Indicated

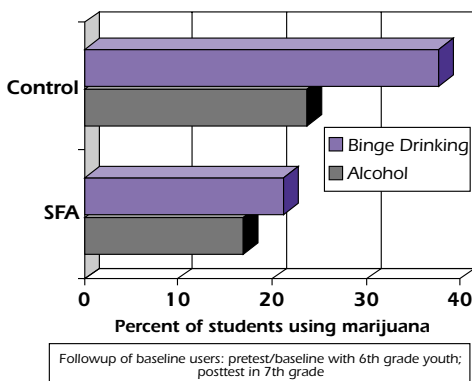


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
www.samhsa.gov

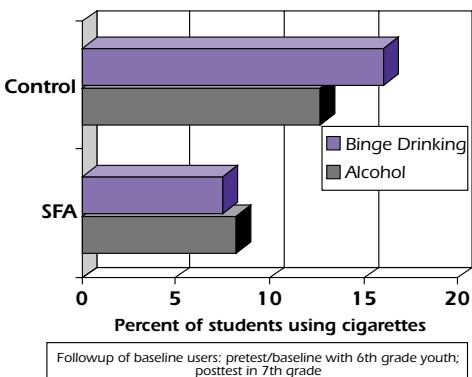
Outcomes

The NIDA study described in the Evaluation Design section indicates that 1) exposure to a 40-session version of SFA can help deter the initiation of regular cigarette smoking and experimental use of marijuana through the end of the seventh grade; 2) this effect held across all racial/ethnic groups studied; 3) this program can also deter the initiation and monthly use of alcohol and binge drinking for Hispanics/Latinos, and 4) this program can delay the progression to regular cigarette smoking and to experimental marijuana use among students who had initiated regular alcohol use or binge drinking, but not regular cigarette smoking, by the end of the sixth grade.

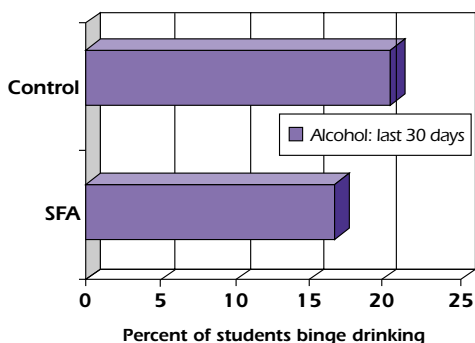
Prevalance rates of 7th grade substance users moving to "harder" substance: marijuana



Prevalance rates of 7th grade substance users moving to other substance: cigarettes



Prevalance rates of 7th grade alcohol users moving to binge drinking



United States, Canada, and around the world where it has been translated into 16 languages, SFA has demonstrated its usefulness and applicability in diverse cultural and socioeconomic populations.

BENEFITS

- Support: Nurturing school and classroom environment
- Empowerment: Service-learning opportunities throughout the course
- Boundaries/expectations: High expectations for and clear standards against harmful behaviors, including drug use
- Constructive use of time: Engagement in positive activities
- Commitment to learning: High motivation, meaningful involvement
- Social competencies: Self-discipline, self-awareness, self-confidence, interpersonal communication, decisionmaking, anger and conflict management, problem solving and critical thinking, resisting drug use, stress management, healthy family relationships, goal setting
- Positive identity: Optimism about potential and future

HOW IT WORKS

SFA has a five-component structure for addressing protective factors that promote healthy, safe, and drug-free behaviors and risk factors for substance use, violence, and other high-risk behaviors.

Classroom Curriculum: 102 skill-building lessons; implementation models range from a minimum 9-week, 40-lesson mini-course to a 3-year program of all 102 lessons; 45-minute lessons are arranged into eight sequential thematic units and a service-learning unit that extends throughout the curriculum.

Parent and Family Involvement: Parents and family participate through shared homework assignments, four parent meetings, a parent book, and direct involvement in school activities.

Positive School Climate: School, school staff, students, parents, and community members establish a school climate committee to reinforce curriculum themes through schoolwide events.

Community Involvement: School staff, parents, Lions Clubs and other service organizations, and youth-serving organizations participate in training workshops, school climate events, panel discussions, service projects, and parent meetings.

Professional Development: Each implementer must attend an introductory 2- or 3-day workshop to receive program materials.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

High fidelity implementation includes participating in service-learning experiences, building a positive classroom and school environment, and involving the family and community in the program through participation in a school implementation team, school climate team, service-learning projects, and school and classroom events.

Training

Each implementing adult must receive an introductory 2- or 3-day professional development training to receive SFA program materials. An extensive 10-day training of trainers program, which prepares local personnel to conduct their own staff development, is available to qualified school districts. Preset regional workshops scheduled by SFA and onsite contract workshops are also available.

Program Materials

Participants leave the introductory workshop with the Skills for Adolescence Curriculum Kit consisting of eight thematic units of study in separate booklets, Year 2 and Year 3 booster units focused on healthy living and drug prevention, a service-learning unit that permeates the entire curriculum, a student book called *Changes and Challenges*, a *Program Guide*, a *Parent Meetings Guide*, a *Drug Information Guide*, and a parent book called *The Surprising Years*—all necessary components and materials to implement the program with high fidelity.

Ongoing Success

Ongoing program success requires a school district-level advocate and the district's acceptance of financial responsibility, an onsite program coordinator, continued support for school staff, and ongoing program evaluation. Funding from Lions Clubs and other sources is key, as well as continuing involvement of parents and community members.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Skills for Adolescence is one of the Lions-Quest K–12 comprehensive positive youth development programs that are used in over 33 countries throughout the world by more than 300,000 implementers. First developed in 1985, SFA is currently in its fourth revised edition. Since 1985, SFA has become the single most widely used positive prevention program in the world. Lions-Quest is a program of the Lions Clubs International Foundation, associated with Lions Clubs International, the largest humanitarian service organization in the world, with 1.4 million members in more than 180 countries and geographic areas.

The Lions-Quest conceptual model was derived from a number of leading developmental models and theories. The program's model describes how a nurturing external environment, in which children learn critical life skills,

TARGET AREAS

Protective Factors To Increase

Individual

- Social and emotional competencies
- Self-discipline, self-confidence
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Decisionmaking
- Assertiveness and refusal skills
- Problem solving and critical thinking
- Stress management
- Goal setting

Family

- Effective communication with family members

Peer

- Resistance to negative pressure
- Social competencies

School

- High expectations for students
- Nurturing learning environment
- Teaching and supporting prosocial development
- Meaningful involvement of students
- Clear behavior standards against harmful behaviors/drug use
- Parent involvement

Risk Factors To Decrease

Individual

- First confrontation with illegal substances, alcohol, and tobacco
- Lack of commitment to school
- Early problem behaviors

Family

- Availability of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs
- Lack of parental involvement in education
- Lack of consistent discipline

Peer

- Friends involved in problem behaviors/drug use
- Availability of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs
- Lack of norms against drug use

School

- Labeling students as "high risk"
- School drug policy not defined or enforced
- Lack of norms against drug use
- Lack of coherent support services for youth

influences and supports the internal conditions that encourage their positive social behaviors and commitments and reduces their risk for problem behaviors such as substance abuse and violence.

EVALUATION DESIGN

More than 50 studies have been conducted on SFA worldwide. Most significant was the longitudinal study conducted for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) by Dr. Marvin Eisen of the Urban Institute in Washington, DC. In the study, 34 schools from Los Angeles, CA; Detroit, MI; and Washington, DC/Baltimore, MD (n=7,426 sixth graders, 71 percent of the eligible population), were randomized to conditions to test the hypothesis that SFA is more effective than standard care in deterring and delaying substance use through middle school. One-year posttest data were collected from 6,239 seventh graders (84 percent those eligible). Initiation of "ever" and "recent" use of five substances for baseline nonusers and changes in recent use for baseline were compared using mixed model regressions to control for school clustering. The intent of this study was to measure the program effectiveness of SFA in reducing low-level aggression in students, reducing chronic misbehavior in school, and producing improved social competencies and school performance. This study employed a quasi-experimental pre-post design, with an experimental group of students receiving SFA integrated into language arts or social studies classes and a comparison group of students receiving traditional course work in the subjects.

PROGRAM DEVELOPER

Susan Keister, M.A.

Susan Keister, M.A., lead developer of Lions-Quest *Skills for Adolescence*, received her B.A. and M.A. degrees from Michigan State University. Between 1983 and 2000, Ms. Keister was vice president for program development at Quest International and led the development of the Lions-Quest K-12 programs. She has participated in the adaptation and translation of the Lions-Quest programs internationally, which have now been translated into 16 languages and reach more than 12 million young people worldwide. Ms. Keister is a fellow of the Fetzer Institute in the area of school transformation. Contributing SFA co-authors include Carol Apacki, Hank Resnik, Cathryn Berger Kaye, Linda Barr, and the Lions-Quest team of international implementers and consultants.

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RECOGNITION

Model Program—Substance Abuse and Mental
Health Services Administration, U.S.
Department of Health and Human Services

Promising Program—Safe and Drug Free
Schools and Community Program, U.S.
Department of Education

Select Program—The Collaborative for
Academic, Social and Emotional Learning
(CASEL)